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ABSTRACT

A proposal for a term paper writing course associated with a content area course is presented in this paper. The paper outlines the proposed course, in which a content area teacher assigns a term paper and has control over appropriate subjects for the students' papers. The paper explains that the course provides help in library research techniques, in developing writing skills, and in developing collaborative learning skills. The paper states that a distinctive aspect of the course is the "write-in," scheduled on a Saturday when students, all writing faculty, and the reference librarian staff do not leave until the student has a rough draft completed. According to the paper, the course is designed to remove the burden of writing instruction from content area instructors and to help students become better writers. Fifteen references, a memo to reference librarians describing the course, a memo to students from the reference librarian, a faculty questionnaire, and five "library pathfinders" designed to aid students in research on particular topics, are attached. (RS)

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Writing and Research Across the Curriculum

A proposal for a new course

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PROPOSAL FOR S200

1. Title of Course

Term Paper Research and Writing: S200

2. Teaching-Learning Problems

The teaching of writing in a university is problematic. Our teaching goals include not only preparing a student to write when he leaves academia, but also preparing a student to write within the confines of the academic community. We teach courses in composition, in technical writing, in advanced expository writing, in creative writing--each of these designed to help a student with a particular writing task that he will either encounter in the years he spends with us in the university, or that he will encounter when he leaves. However, this duality in the teaching goals of a writing program often makes it difficult for students to focus on the writing task at hand. Often the student is unable to carry over into another discipline the skills he acquires in one of the writing courses.

Another factor, not to be underestimated, was the expertise of the writing instructor. Often the writing instructor was very able to work efficiently in the humanities. However, because many of these instructors had little or no training in the social or natural sciences, the content of the students' papers in these areas was more difficult for the writing instructor to manage, and the essays became glorified book reports. Further, writing instructors often reported that they felt rushed and that the pace of the class and the necessity to leave one discipline for another made the class seem harried and unorganized. Finally, some students elected to take Writing Across the Curriculum late in their college careers, after they had already taken all the courses that Writing Across the Curriculum was meant to serve.

3. Course Objectives

We propose that S200 will do the following:

Give students a writing course that is grounded in another discipline (the host course) so that they will be encouraged to carry-over their writing and research skills;

Teach term paper writing in connection with a student's major so that he might be better equipped to pursue more complex issues in research in his upper-level classes;

Guide the student in the library through the steps of a researched paper so that he develops a scholarly methodology;

Help the student learn to write on schedule so that he has ample time for thoughtful revision;

Teach the student that the act of writing is the act of discovery in a research process and that accomplished writers often begin writing tasks without knowing exactly what they will say; and

Teach the student, by means of critically reading his classmates' papers for errors, to sharpen his own critical and proof-reading skills, to help him avoid error on his own paper, and to prepare him for negotiation and collaboration beyond the classroom.

4. Methodology

(The methods we describe are those we are using in a pilot of this course in the Spring semester, 1987.)

We are developing a class that we believe capitalizes on the strategies developed in traditional Writing Across the Curriculum classes, a one hour course called Term Paper Research and Writing. The difference between this class and other classes with the same name is that this class must be

taken in conjunction with a regularly scheduled academic class. A host instructor assigns the term paper, tells the writing instructor what style of documentation he prefers and shares with the instructor all other requirements that the student must consider. The student, in the Term Paper Research and Writing class, learns to write the paper the host instructor assigns. The host instructor is freed from the task of using class time to teach term paper instruction; the writing teacher is freed from the task of making sure that a paper in a foreign discipline adequately covers the bibliography and conventions in the field and has a thesis worth developing.

The writing classes are made up of ten to twelve students who may or may not be writing a paper in the same discipline. The student begins the class in the library with his classmates, the writing instructor and the reference librarians. After an initial general session, the librarians schedule a conference with each student to plan an individual research strategy. The writing teacher, during these first six weeks, uses class time to discuss documentation styles, note-taking strategies, opinion and fact, plagairism--all of the parts of a term paper. The student is actually doing his research at the same time so that he can discuss specific problems with his instructor.

Doing the research for a paper is actually the part of the paper where the students have the least trouble. With the individual guidance of the reference librarian, most students

find more than enough material to document their papers. The problem for almost all of the students involved in a term paper is the actual writing of the paper.

We find that the transition from the preliminary research to the writing of the first draft of the paper is the most difficult part of the writing process for the student. A unique part of S200 is the concept of a WRITE-IN. On a Saturday, scheduled in the syllabus for the seventh week of the semester, students come to the university and meet in conference rooms. There, with the members of the entire writing faculty present, including S200 instructors and librarians, the student stays until he has written a first draft of his paper. This procedure benefits the student in the following ways: he is not distracted by his friends or family and can work steadily; when he is unable to find direction someone is in the room to help him move forward; when he becomes discouraged someone is there to encourage; when he finds that he does not have information he thought he had or didn't know he needed, the library is close by and a reference librarian is waiting. The goal of the Write-In is that the student not leave the campus, even if he stays until evening, without a first, rough draft of his paper. This step helps the students more than any others. The Write-In is our attempt to correct the phenomenon we experienced during our own undergraduate writing experiences: that writing a term paper is so painful for most students that they habitually put it off until the last few days, thus turning in to their instructors what is often a first draft.

After the student writes his first draft at the Write-In, he duplicates it for the class and the second part of the course begins. In class for the next six weeks the class members read each other's papers and criticize them. They do not criticize content, unless they too happen to know something about the subject. However, they do tackle the organizational strategies of the paper and they do discuss the logical sequences of the paper. Students also learn how to handle criticism from classmates, how to incorporate that criticism into their papers, and how to <u>give</u> productive criticism. The student then revises his paper at least once more before he turns it in to the host instructor.

In this course, Term Paper Research and Writing, it is true that the student works in one discipline instead of three. However, the student may now choose to do a term paper in a course that is in his major, and since this course is a requirement in the student's sophomore year of study, he can be comfortable doing advanced research in his upper-level courses, now that he is aware of the basic bibliography.

Another advantage to this course, and one that cannot be overlooked with our ever-tightening budget, is that this course teaches research and writing skills for one hour of credit. It heavily relies on the course material of a three hour class in another discipline so that, in a sense, the student has a lab hour attached to the host course. This one hour course does not substitute for a second semester of

expository writing, but it fills some gaps for the student who has only a one-semester writing requirement. It also fills gaps that might be left in a traditional Writing Across the Curriculum class when the student's major is not covered thoroughly enough.

We are currently teaching a pilot of this course and we're very pleased with the results. We find that we can do much toward breaking down the student's resistance to the research and writing process by helping him move step by step through the process. We find that if the student begins his paper early, if he has companionship while he writes his first draft, and if he has the guidance of an instructor dedicated only to being his coach and not his grader, the student looks forward to more complicated research projects later in his college career.

5. Evaluation Process

The students at our university are required to have a supervised term paper experience in their first sixty hours of class work. If the student elects to take S200, which supports this requirement, and if the student attends all classes and writes and revises his paper to the satisfaction of both his writing instructor and the host instructor, the student receives a Pass on his transcript. However, the actual final grade that the student receives on his paper will be given solely by the host instructor.

The student submits his paper to the host instructor with a form from the writing instructor saying that the writing instructor is convinced that the student has turned in the best paper he can write. The writing instructor does not comment on the quality of the paper, nor does the writing instructor sign the form until the student has completely revised his paper.

6. Technology Required

None.

7. Cost

None outside the salaries for the writing instructors.

8. Additional Details

All of us who worked on this project during the pilot felt that the idea of the Write-In was one of the most successful strategies for helping students overcome their anxieties about writing and producing their papers on time. Next year we are planning to use this same idea in connection with other writing classes, notably freshman composition. The lack of direction and focus most students seem to feel when faced with a writing task can be virtually eliminated when students can work in the company of each other and with the support of a writing teacher.

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Reference Librarians' Guide to teaching S200

There is so much information available today in so many specialized sources and formats, even in a small academic library such as ours, that often a student doing a specific research project either doesn't know about all this information or is overwhelmed by it. We want to be sure that the S200 students are aware of the variety of information available in the library, but that they do not feel overwhelmed by it. They need a general knowledge of library resources and procedures, but they should also have the ability to zero in on a specific information need.
Therefore, these are the general teaching goals:

Each student should know the basics: the general location and arrangement of books and periodicals, the location and function of circulation and reference desks, the function of library personnel, the use of the card catalog, and the use of at least one of the basic periodical indexes.

In addition, students should be firmly aware that there is a great variety of other resources available in each specific subject area (such as government documents, computer databases, specialized reference books, information files, etc.), and that the reference librarian can help them identify and access these materials.

That is the general component of library instruction, which we deliver by lecture to groups of students in all disciplines. However, this is not enough. Equally important is our goal of specificity: to work individually with each student, in that student's major and within the instructor's guidelines, to provide the most appropriate search strategy for his specific research project. To that end, we set up flexible 15 minute appointments with each student where one student and one librarian discuss the topic and the kinds of information required.

We have prepared Pathfinders for each class involved in S200 (in conjunction with the professor) which suggest general search strategies, and in the 15 minute session, that Pathfinder is tailored even more closely to the student's particular information need. The librarian actually takes the student through some of the sources to explain their usage and appropriateness, even suggesting index terms, subject headings, or a general approach, if needed.

This individual attention is a great motivation for independent work from that point. Other motivators, of course, include the fact that the student is working in his major, that he now <u>knows</u> someone in the library he can turn to for assistance, and that he has in his hand his own list of sources, his own treasure maps, to lead him to the information he needs.

All students seem to benefit from this combination of general instruction and personal attention, and they tend to be much more comfortable and effective using the library.

To: Students involved in S200

From: The Reference Librarians

You don't have to know everything about this library or libraries in general to do successful research. You do need, however, to know three things:

1. How to use the card catalog
2. How to use at least one periodical index (such as the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature)
3. Where to go for help

If you are unsure about using the card catalog or about using a periodical index, let us know at the beginning of your research and we'll show you. (It won't take long.) And, for any kind of help finding information, come to us at the Reference Desk.

You also need to be aware of some special services that are available to you. As an IUS student, you may use any of the Metroversity libraries by showing your IUS ID. We have a listing of their periodical holdings. In addition, we can borrow for you virtually any book or article you need through our interlibrary loan program. You simply fill out a request form and we can have the item delivered to you--at no charge--usually within 10-14 days.

Another service (which you probably won't need for this paper but which you should certainly be aware of) is computer data base searching. We have access to hundreds of computerized databases which we can search for you very quickly and efficiently. There is a charge for this service, and it is by no means appropriate for every information need, but when you need exhaustive research, or when you are unable to find information elsewhere, an online search may be just what you need. If you are interested, check with a reference librarian.

Enjoy your research!

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE (from library)

Your answers to these questions will help us guide your students through the research process. Please give any other information that you feel might best help us advise your students.

What is the approximate length you prefer for a research paper?

What is the appropriate number of sources you want your students to use? (Also, are there any sources your students may <u>not</u> use?)

Do you want your students to focus on a narrow aspect of the subject, or do you prefer a broad survey paper--or is either okay?

Are there any particular sources that we should steer your students toward or away from?

Do you want us to encourage your students to use online search and interlibrary loan?

Do you have any material on reserve that might be helpful to your students for this paper?

Can you suggest a sample topic?

What documentation style do you prefer?

Do you have an assignment sheet for this paper?

When an instructor designates his course as having the term paper option, the Reference Librarians prepare a short Pathfinder to help the student through the research process. This Pathfinder does not take the place of the individual conference; rather, the Pathfinder supplements it.

We enclose several samples from various disciplines.

LIBRARY PATHFINDER

Introduction to American Politics

Although you won't use it in your paper, you might want to find a book in the card catalog to give you an overview before you start your research. Use the Subject Catalog.

For periodical articles, start with the Reader's Guide for general, non-scholarly news articles and some analysis. Be careful abut selecting popular periodicals. The news and opinion magazines are usually okay, but not Ladies Home Journal or Popular Mechanics. You can use the Magazine Index for this kind of article.

You will also depend on newspapers for the kind of current information you need. The New York Times and the Washington Post are especially good. The Index will lead you to the date, page, and column numbers. Microfilm copies of the newspapers are in the gray cabinet in the southeast corner of the library. You can simply read the film, or you can copy it.

Another good source is the Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report in the reference area. This will give you current status of legislature activity on your subject. It may refer you to past issues for background.

You will also want to check the Public Affairs Information Service Bulletin. This will refer you to articles, books, pamphlets, government publications (including congressional hearings and reports), and some newspaper articles.

You may also want to search through our Federal Publications Index--a mechanical index on microfilm, of government publications by author, title, and subject, which is updated twice a year. This source will describe each item and, more importantly, give its classification number, which identifies and locate the item in our collection.

LIBRARY PATHFINDER

Introduction to Marketing Management

When you begin to think about selecting a company with which to work, you will want to consider the amount of information available. Most of the information libraries have concerns public corporations. Private companies are not required to publish financial data. Service industries are also not well covered.

For topic information about and individual company, the first place to begin is Moody's Manuals. The are seven sets which cover a wide variety of public companies--manufacturers, public utilities, banks, multinationals, etc. Each organization description lists, when available, company name, capital structure, subsidiaries, business and product summaries, etc. If you are not certain which of the seven sets will contain your company, check Moody's Complete Corporate Index. It will direct you to the appropriate set. You must use the index in the front of each volume since the manuals are not in strict alphabetical order.

Value Line is an investor's tool which gives stock market information on companies actively traded on the New York and American Stock Exchanges as well as those traded on some regional and over-the-counter exchanges. It also gives brief analyses of approximately seventy-five industries.

A set which gives more industry information than Value Line is Standard and Poor's Industry Surveys. This provides detailed comparative company analyses by specific industry. Basic analyses are provided for each industry and are accompanied by current analyses which are updated periodically.

Additional information on both industries and individual companies can be found in various periodicals. The standard index used to find these articles is Business Periodicals Index. As its title indicates, this index lists articles found in journals dealing with business and economics. Periodicals indexed here range from popular newsstand types (Business Week, Fortune, Forbes) to scholarly publications (Harvard Business Review, Journal of Marketing Research).

Newspaper articles may also be of some help, but may not be listed in Business Periodicals Index. You should check the Wall Street Journal Index for articles in this major business daily. This index is divided into two parts. The first part is the general news index and is used to look for articles on a particular subject or industry. The second part, or corporate news index, lists articles dealing with specific companies.

The New York Times may also provide some valuable information. Its index, however, is not divided into general and corporate news. It is arranged like Business Periodicals Index.

If you do not find what you need in these sources, you might want to check Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature. It indexes articles found in general, non-scholarly news magazines (Time, Newsweek) as well as articles which contain some analysis (New Republic, National Review). You will have to determine which articles will be of use to you.

Magazine Index is another option you might consider. It is similar to Reader's Guide in the type of periodicals it covers, but it indexes almost twice as many magazines and displays five years of indexing. Again, you will have to decide whether these articles are from popular periodicals and whether they will be of some use to you.

This is only a brief guide to help you begin your research. Reference personnel are on hand to help you if you have any questions and if you need assistance doing research.

LIBRARY PATHFINDER

Music for the Listener

You will probably depend heavily on the card catalog for your research for this paper. In addition to author-title-subject access, the card catalog also provides you with access to our record collection, indexed by composer, title, type of work, and often by performer. From the card catalog you will be able to find books about your composer or other music subject, and you will also be able to locate recordings and cassette tapes of appropriate musical works. We do have a set-up which allows you to record discs onto cassette tapes for later study at home.

You will also want to use the material in the music section of our Reference Department. One especially noteworthy item is Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, a 20 volume set which provides extensive coverage of music topics. There are lists of references at the end of each article which will provide you with titles of other works on your subject which you may request through interlibrary loan.

To find periodical articles, you may start with the Reader's Guide or Magazine Index for general review or analysis articles. In addition, we have an index specifically dedicated to music subjects: the Music Index, located in the Index Area.

You might also find significant articles in newspapers such as the New York Times or the Washington Post. Check those appropriate indexes if you still need information.

LIBRARY PATHFINDER

Introduction to Geography

For this paper you may very well have to supplement what you find in our library with interlibrary loans from other libraries. So you need to look for two things: material that we have here that you can use in your paper, and suggestions for other books and periodical articles which we can borrow for you on interlibrary loan. Because you may have to depend on interlibrary loan, you will want to start your research early.

The best place to start is the subject catalog. Just look under the geographical area you'll be working with (for example, "Hawaii"). Remember to check the books you find not only for information you can use, but also for bibliographies--suggestions about other books and periodical articles that you can request on interlibrary loan.

Encyclopedias often are useful sources for bibliographies. Two particularly good ones are the Academic American Encyclopedia and the Encyclopedia Britannica. Check the list of books suggested at the end of the article about your geographical area and there will almost always be one to two about the geography of the region.

Also, Dr. Hill has a number of books on reserve at the circulation desk. You may look at the list of titles and choose to check out one or more of them. They are excellent sources, not only of useful information, but also of suggestions for material to request on interlibrary loan.

Another source listing of books by subject is the Subject Guide to Books in Print, located in the Reference area. And we do have several Geography Bibliographies. Check the subject catalog under Geography-Bibliography.

For periodical articles, try the Reader's Guide and the Magazine Index. We also have cumulative indexes to our collection of National Geographic, which might be useful. You should also try the Social Science Index for more scholarly, in-depth periodical articles about your subject.

LIBRARY PATHFINDER

Physiology

You might want to review your textbook to refine or focus your topic before you begin research. You may also want to look through the subject catalog for general books on your subject.

A good place to start is the Reader's Guide, but be careful to select only articles with bibliographies that appear in science periodicals such as Scientific American or Nature.

Go next to the General Science Index (in the index area) which indexes a larger number of science periodicals.

For more detailed and technical articles, go to the Index Medicus in the index area. These will lead you to articles in medical journals, and although we have a few of these, you will probably need to go to another Metroversity library, or you will need to request the information through Interlibrary Loan.

You should also consult Biological Abstracts (in the index area) which will provide you with highly specialized technical articles which have appeared in scholarly journals.

Another source of information would be the nursing journal indexes, including Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature and the International Nursing Index (both in the index area). We do have on hand a number of nursing journals; many others are available in the Metroversity system or from Interlibrary Loan.

Note to the Reader: We have grappled with the problem of the appropriate pronoun. We have tried all methods including referring to all instructors as she and all students as he. Ultimately this procedure became so cumbersome that we resorted to what we considered the most unobtrusive pronoun he. We are sensitive to this problem, but are unable to solve it to everyone's satisfaction.